

But let us not forget one crucial thing. With Bill Clinton, there is always a huge difference between reality and his speeches.

Let me illustrate. During his campaign for the Presidency, Bill Clinton argued passionately for deficit reduction and the need to balance the budget. In fact, in June 1992, Bill Clinton told Larry King that he would present a plan to balance the budget in 5 years. This never happened.

For the last 3 years, the President has introduced budgets that called for more deficit spending, not less.

His last budget, the one he just rejected last night, calls for \$200 billion deficits well into the next century.

Mr. Speaker, we are glad he wants to get into the debate, but I urge everyone to keep in mind the difference between Mr. Clinton's speeches and his actions.

PRESIDENT COMMENDED FOR TOUGH STAND AGAINST JAPANESE AUTOMAKERS

(Mr. VOLKMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate President Bill Clinton for the very tough and long awaited stand he has taken against Japanese automakers. I applaud his decision to place a 100-percent tariff on Japanese luxury automobiles until they allow American cars and parts to be imported without unfair barriers. For years and years I have watched President after President threaten and warn Japan about their unfair trade practices, but finally President Clinton has ended the threats and has taken the decisive action that has been needed for many years. Cars and car parts account for most of the huge United States trade deficit we have with Japan, yet despite negotiations in good faith Japan has refused to remove the barriers that prevent United States automakers to compete. President Clinton has a record that clearly shows he is open to free trade, but now at the same time he shows he is willing to take forceful action against foreign unfairness. I applaud the President for this decisive action, and ask my colleagues to support him in this bold and appropriate action.

THE CHANGING PRESIDENTIAL WINDS

(Mr. GOSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, we all should welcome the President to the budget debate—and hope that this time, the shift in Presidential winds will be a lasting one. In announcing that "It's time to clean up this mess," the President made big news. It is not hard to see why such a proclamation, coming

from the President of the United States, makes headline news.

Four months ago, when the President submitted his official budget to Congress with no plan for bringing about fiscal balance, he clearly did not think the time had arrived to clean up the mess. Even more interesting is that, after signing into law the largest tax increase in history in 1993, the President declared that he had taken the necessary steps to clean up the mess.

The President's changing view on this subject has been somewhat of a whirlwind. But today, even though the President's plan is 3 years later and a half trillion dollars shorter than the Republican plan to balance the budget, we welcome him to the debate.

MEDICARE

(Mr. BARCIA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about the proposed changes to the Medicare Program. Taking away funding from Medicare, which benefits 35 million aged and disabled Americans, is an unacceptable act of Congress.

I have heard from hundreds of senior citizens from my district urging me to maintain and preserve their Medicare benefits. Our elderly Americans have worked too hard for their future. To dismantle the program they depend on for their health care needs would be devastating.

Medicare provides an invaluable and irreplaceable security for seniors. With the population of older Americans growing every year, Medicare must be strengthened and decisions must be made to support the program not break it down. The future of Medicare is critical not only for seniors but for all Americans who will someday need it.

Although Congress must strive toward a balanced budget and address the solvency of Medicare, let us turn to other programs for cuts, not our seniors.

Older Americans deserve our support. Balancing the budget is no easy task and it will require tough decisions that I am willing to make. But making our senior citizens struggle to pay for health insurance is not a choice I am willing to make.

DETAILS OF PRESIDENT'S BUDGET YET TO COME

(Mr. JONES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, remember the first budget that the President sent to Congress this year. It came up for a vote on the Senate floor and was defeated 99 to 0—yes, 99 to 0. Not one Democrat supported his budget.

Now, the President tells us that he has seen the light. He has realized that the American people really do want to balance the budget. So, at the end of the process, he has finally jumped on board—we hope.

Where are the details? Where is the fine print?

It is easy to stand up and talk the talk, but it takes real leadership to walk the walk. Republicans have shown that leadership through our balanced budget plan.

Mr. Speaker, we hope the President will soon show us the details of his plan.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, last weekend in New Hampshire, a shake of hands promised to shake up a system in dire need of shaking up.

With a handshake, the President and the Speaker implicitly endorsed a bill that Representatives JOHNSON, MEEHAN, and I introduced earlier this year to reform campaign finance laws.

For 20 years, Congress has failed miserably in its efforts to reform Federal elections, to level the playing field between challengers and incumbents.

Americans want elections instead of auctions.

Our bill is modeled closely after the law which created the military base closing commission.

The commission would be mandated to examine all key principles of campaign finance reform.

The commission would present Congress with a bill for a straight up-or-down vote.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to turn the promise of a handshake into the reality of law.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

(Mr. FRANKS of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FRANKS of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I have been opposed to racial and gender based set-asides and preferential treatment throughout my career, but I believe that we must maintain and/or strengthen three aspects of our equal opportunity laws:

First, we must ensure that opportunities are made known and are accessible to all Americans, followed by fair competition.

Second, we must continue to have a mechanism to determine whether an entity has violated antidiscrimination laws.

Third, we must strengthen the enforcement aspect of our equal opportunity laws. Enforcement should be swift and severe.

However, Mr. Speaker, if set-asides and preferential treatment are not removed from the authorization and appropriation bills, I will attempt to offer amendments on the House floor to eliminate them all. I do so not to fuel the debate on affirmative action but to help ensure closure on this potentially divisive and emotional issue.